

HJR 22 -- Debt Limitations for School Districts

SPONSOR: Neth

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education by a vote of 16 to 4.

Upon voter approval, this proposed constitutional amendment allows a school district to become indebted in an amount exceeding 15% but not more than 25% of the value of the taxable tangible property in the district if the voters also approve a separate question at the same election authorizing the district to become indebted in an amount specified in the separate question.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that two types of school districts need more bonding capacity: those with rapid enrollment growth and those with low assessed property value. Additional requirements for exceeding the current cap should prevent irresponsible use of the extra capacity.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Neth; John Jungmann, Liberty School District; Peggy Taylor, Nixa School Board; George K. Baum and Company; Missouri School Boards Association; Mike Lodewegen, School Administrators Coalition; Cooperating School Districts of Greater St. Louis; Missouri State Teachers Association; and Missouri American Federation of Teachers.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that the fiscal responsibility of school districts is an issue of concern.

Testifying against the bill was Missouri Farm Bureau.